

## STRANGERS IN PARADISE: ESTRANGEMENT AND WORKING-CLASS EMOTIONAL CONVERGENCE IN LUK THUNG SONGS (1970s-1980s)

CHAWAROTE VALYAMEDHI

College of Foreign Languages and Literature, National Chengchi University, Taiwan

Author's email: [c.valy@nccu.edu.tw](mailto:c.valy@nccu.edu.tw)

### ABSTRACT

This article examines how Luk Thung songs, popular Thai songs commonly associated with rural life, from the late 1970s-1980s articulate working-class subjectivity among rural-origin men and women entering urban and industrial wage labor through three interrelated affective modes: rural estrangement, transitional desire, and working-class emotional convergence. Rather than treating these subjects as rural-urban workers in a formal or institutional sense, the analysis focuses on how rural individuals experience emotional transition as they move into wage labor in Bangkok and its industrial peripheries. The study analyzed four influential songs from the period of 1970s-1980s —*Sao AM*, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*, *Chanthana Thi Rak*, and *Chanthana Top Rak*—performed by major Luk Thung singers. Together, these works illuminate an affective continuum: from rural defensiveness toward Bangkok-centered modernity, to anticipatory rural-urban encounters, and finally to the intimate emotional negotiations of industrial factory workers. Through this progression, the Luk Thung music genre emerges as a sonic archive that not only reflects but actively shapes emotional trajectories of migration, labor, and belonging. Methodologically, the study employed qualitative analysis of lyrics, sound recordings, and performance practices, combining close reading, sonic interpretation, and sociohistorical contextualization. Drawing on theories of affective circulation and aurality, the study treats Luk Thung music genre not merely as a representational genre but as a site of affective production, demonstrating how songs actively organize estrangement, aspiration, and emotional convergence during Thailand's late-twentieth-century industrial transformation.

### Research Article

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### INTRODUCTION

Luk Thung, a popular Thai music genre commonly associated with rural life, agrarian labor, and working-class experience, and sometimes labelled as *Thai country songs*, has long served as a key expressive form through which rural Thais negotiate social change. This role became especially prominent during the late 1970s-1980s, when rapid industrialization and large-scale rural-urban mobility reshaped everyday life. Existing scholarship has shown how Luk Thung music genre reflects rural displacement and urban aspiration (Hirata, 2012; Jirattikorn, 2006; Mitchell, 2015), articulates gendered labor precarity (Mills, 1999), and encodes working-class identity through sound and performance (Kitiarsa, 2009). Yet the affective processes through which Luk Thung songs actively produce working-class subjectivity, rather than merely mirroring social conditions, remain undertheorized.

In this article, the phrase *Strangers in Paradise* is used as an analytic lens rather than a descriptive metaphor. It names an affective position through which rural-origin working-class subjects encounter Bangkok-centered modernity as both desirable and disorienting. The term “paradise” invoked here refers not to a concrete place but to an imagined horizon of urban opportunity, consumption, and social mobility circulating in late-twentieth-century Thailand. To be a “stranger” in this context is not to be fully excluded, but to inhabit a condition of emotional distance, moral unease, and partial belonging within that horizon. Luk Thung songs give sonic and narrative form to this condition by articulating estrangement, vulnerability, and caution, while also enabling moments of emotional recognition and convergence among working-class listeners.

Rather than adopting formal or institutional categories of migration, this study takes a socio-cultural perspective on rural-origin men and women who relocated internally to Bangkok and its industrial peripheries for wage labor during the 1970s-1980s. The analysis centers on how these individuals experience emotional transition as they enter urban and industrial work, emphasizing affective negotiation, precarity, and belonging rather than legal definitions of mobility. Accordingly, the article uses terms such as *rural-origin working-class subjects* or *rural people entering urban and industrial wage labor* to describe the social actors represented in Luk Thung songs.

Addressing a gap in existing scholarship, the study examines how selected Luk Thung songs construct working-class subjectivity through three interrelated affective processes unfolding across rural-urban transition: *rural estrangement*, *transitional desire*, and *working-class emotional convergence*. These modes form an affective arc rather than discrete stages, through which rural-origin subjects negotiate mobility, labor, and belonging. Following Ahmed's (2004) argument that emotions orient subjects toward particular futures, the analysis shows how Luk Thung songs organize listeners' emotional trajectories within Bangkok's expanding industrial landscape. Ochoa Gautier's (2014) concept of the sonic archive further clarifies how working-class subjectivity becomes audible through vocal timbre, phrasing, and performance, not lyrics alone.

The article focuses on four influential songs: *Sao AM* (sung by Phumphuang Duangchan); *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* (sung by Soraphet Phinyo and Nongnut Duangchiwan); *Chanthana Thi Rak* (sung by Rakchat Sirichai); and *Chanthana Top Rak* (sung by Phumphuang Duangchan). Together, these works trace a continuum from rural defensiveness toward the city (*Sao AM*), to transitional rural-urban encounters (*Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*), and finally to the intimate emotional negotiations of industrial workers (the *Chanthana* duet). By reframing Luk Thung songs as a collective site of affective production, the study demonstrates how songs actively organize emotional trajectories across estrangement, transition, and convergence during Thailand's industrial transformation.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze how selected Luk Thung songs articulate working-class identity among rural people transitioning into urban and industrial wage labor through the affective modes of estrangement and working-class emotional convergence.
2. To interpret how these songs function as a "sonic archive" that reflects and shapes the emotional experiences of rural-origin working-class subjects during Thailand's late-twentieth-century rural-to-urban labor transition.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing scholarship on Thai Luk Thung songs has examined the genre as a key medium for expressing rural life, working-class aspiration, and the emotional consequences of rural-urban mobility. Rather than adopting policy-oriented or institutional approaches to labor migration, this article engages scholarship on internal rural-urban transition, working-class cultural formation, and affective mediation through popular music. From this perspective, Luk Thung music genre is understood not merely as a reflection of labor movement, but as a cultural form that actively organizes emotional experience, social recognition, and classed belonging among rural-origin workers entering urban and industrial life.

### Luk Thung Songs as Cultural and Affective Archive

Luk Thung, a popular Thai music genre associated with rural life, agrarian labor, and working-class experience—and sometimes labelled as *Thai country songs*—has long served as a key medium through which rural Thais negotiate social change, particularly during the late 1970s-1980s, when industrialization and rural-urban mobility intensified. Since the late twentieth century, Luk Thung songs have increasingly intersected with *molam*, a traditional Lao vocal form from northeastern Thailand characterized by expert singing (*mo*) and stylized Lao intonation (*lam*), often performed in extended dialogic formats (Hirata, 2013). This hybridization, commonly known as *luk thung-molam*, has played a significant role in articulating ethnicity, migration, and working-class identity within Thailand's popular music industry (Hirata, 2012).

Scholarship consistently situates the Luk Thung music genre within rural identity, migration, and Thailand's uneven modernization. Mitchell (2015) characterizes the genre as a cultural "archive" that documents the emotional and social histories of rural Thais confronting development, agricultural instability, and urban aspiration. Luk Thung songs' significance thus lies not only in narrative content but in its capacity to organize collective memory and shared affect.

In combination, these studies establish Luk Thung songs as a cultural and affective archive: a medium that reflects rural lifeworlds while actively generating emotional structures through which listeners navigate rural-urban transition. This perspective provides the basis for analyzing how the songs examined here encode both estrangement and working-class emotional convergence.

### Migration, Gender, and Emotional Precarity

Research on rural-urban labor transition in Thailand provides essential sociocultural context for interpreting emotional narratives in Luk Thung songs. Mills (1999) documents how young women from rural regions entered Bangkok's rapidly expanding industrial workforce during the late 1970s-1980s. While factory labor created new economic possibilities, it also intensified moral scrutiny, homesickness, and surveillance of female respectability. These conditions shaped the

emotional vocabulary available to rural-origin women—fear of abandonment, anxiety over status, and the need to defend dignity—dynamics vividly reflected in songs such as *Chanthana Top Rak*.

Kitiarsa (2009) offers a complementary gendered perspective by examining how rural-origin men engaged in urban wage labor use Luk Thung songs and *molam* lyrics to reassert dignity under precarious conditions. He argues that popular music provides “emotional scripts” through which men negotiate homesickness, insecurity, and downward social comparison. Through performances of sincerity, patience, and moral steadfastness, music becomes a cultural arena in which vulnerability is transformed into a socially legible form of masculinity. This insight directly informs the analysis of *Chanthana Thi Rak*, where rural masculinity is articulated in tension with urban labor hierarchies. Collectively, the work of Mills (1999) and Kitiarsa (2009) demonstrates that working-class subjectivity is shaped not only by structural economic pressures but also by gendered affective regimes. Their scholarship clarifies the emotional grammar through which narratives of Luk Thung songs operate and prepares the conceptual ground for a broader theoretical account of how emotions circulate within rural-urban working-class communities—a transition developed explicitly in the following section, “Emotion, Belonging, and the Sonic Archive.”

### **Emotion, Belonging, and the Sonic Archive**

To theorize how Luk Thung songs produce collective identity among rural-origin working-class listeners, this study draws on an understanding of emotion as a social and circulatory force (Ahmed, 2004). From this perspective, emotions do not reside solely within individuals but actively shape social boundaries by circulating between subjects, objects, and cultural forms. Luk Thung songs’ recurring themes of longing, fear, sincerity, and moral vigilance therefore function not merely as representations of feeling, but as shared affective scripts through which listeners recognize themselves and one another.

Insights from sound studies further shift attention from emotion as content to listening as practice. Aurality conceptualizes sound as a mode of knowledge production through which social and affective worlds are organized (Ochoa Gautier, 2014). Applied to Luk Thung songs, this framework positions the genre as a sonic archive of rural-urban labor transition, in which emotional experience is circulated, stabilized, and rendered intelligible across distance and social change. This understanding resonates with the concept of affective archives, which emphasizes how emotions are preserved and transmitted through cultural media such as letters, mediated intimacy, and narrative exchange (Cvetkovich, 2003). Read together, these approaches frame Luk Thung songs—particularly letter-songs and dialogic duets—as affective repositories that circulate experiences of aspiration, separation, precarity, and mutual recognition within working-class life.

Taken together, these frameworks ground the paper’s analytical distinction between rural estrangement and working-class emotional convergence. Estrangement articulates moral distance as rural values encounter urban discipline, while emotional convergence names the formation of solidarity through shared precarity and circulating affect. The Luk Thung music genre thus emerges not simply as a mirror of social change, but as a cultural form that actively organizes emotional life during Thailand’s late-twentieth-century rural–urban transformation.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. How do the songs construct emotional positions that frame the listener’s relationship to rural life, urban aspiration, and factory labor?
2. In what ways do these affective structures operate as a sonic archive of working-class experience among rural people transitioning into urban and industrial wage labor?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative methodological framework to analyze how Luk Thung songs construct and circulate working-class emotional experience during Thailand’s industrial transition. Because the objects of analysis are cultural texts—lyrics, sound recordings, and performance practices—rather than human participants, the methodology centers on close reading, sonic interpretation, and sociohistorical contextualization. The approach treats Luk Thung songs not merely as reflections of social change, but as affective formations that shape how listeners understand estrangement, aspiration, and emotional convergence (Ahmed, 2004; Ochoa Gautier, 2014). Accordingly, the methods integrate textual analysis, listening-based interpretive tools, and historical contextualization to examine how emotional meaning is produced and circulated across the selected corpus. The following subsections outline the research design, corpus selection, analytical instruments, data collection procedures, and interpretive strategies guiding the study.

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in textual analysis, sonic and performance analysis, and sociohistorical contextualization. Rather than treating Luk Thung songs as passive reflections of labor experience, the study examines how they actively construct emotional frameworks through which rural-origin working-class listeners understand themselves and their place within Thailand's late-twentieth-century rural-urban labor landscape.

Drawing on Ahmed's (2004) theorization of emotion as a force that shapes social orientation and boundaries, and Ochoa Gautier's (2014) emphasis on listening as a mode of cultural interpretation, the analysis treats affect as both a cultural product and a constitutive force. The research design therefore focuses on how Luk Thung songs produce affective positions and working-class subjectivities, rather than merely representing social conditions.

The analytic structure traces an affective arc across three modes:

- Rural Estrangement
- Transitional Desire
- Working-Class Emotional Convergence

This tripartite model captures the shifting emotional terrain through which rural men and women negotiate belonging across home communities, transitional labor imaginaries, and urban-industrial settings.

### Sources of Data

The primary dataset of this study consists of four Luk Thung songs selected for their cultural prominence and analytical value in tracing the emotional formation of working-class subjectivity among rural people transitioning into urban and industrial wage labor during Thailand's late-twentieth-century rural-urban labor transformation. Each song represents a distinct affective position within the broader rural-urban continuum—from transitional aspiration to urban estrangement to factory-based emotional convergence. All selections were widely circulated, commercially successful, and performed by influential Luk Thung artists, and their sustained popularity indicates a strong resonance with listeners' lived experiences, particularly among rural-origin and working-class audiences.

1. *Sao AM* — released in 1986 and performed by Phumphuang Duangchan. This song encodes rural identity through the metaphor of AM versus FM radio frequencies, framing Bangkok modernity as emotionally dangerous while affirming rural moral coherence. Its widespread reception and enduring popularity make it a clear example of estrangement articulated as a shared cultural stance, rather than an isolated sentiment.
2. *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* — released in 1981 and performed by Soraphet Phinyo and Nongnut Duangchiwan. Although the song does not depict factory labor directly, it portrays a formative moment of transitional desire, set in the liminal zone of Dao Khanong—an area historically associated with garment factories and rural-origin labor settlement. The song's popularity reflects the broad recognizability of this anticipatory emotional register, which provides an important baseline for understanding later experiences of estrangement and industrial emotional convergence.
3. *Chanthana Thi Rak* — released in 1979 and performed by Rakchat Sirichai. This iconic letter-song, which earned the singer nationwide recognition, presents the male perspective of a factory worker negotiating class anxiety, literacy shame, and emotional vulnerability. Its success suggests that these affective tensions were widely legible and shared among working-class listeners, rather than idiosyncratic expressions of individual hardship.
4. *Chanthana Top Rak* — released in 1985 and performed by Phumphuang Duangchan. As the dialogic reply to *Chanthana Thi Rak*, this song articulates the emotional world of a female factory worker marked by low wages, fear of moral scrutiny, and anxiety over beauty and self-worth. Together, the two *Chanthana* songs form a gendered dialogic pair whose popularity underscores the extent to which emotional convergence emerged through shared precarity and mutual recognition.

Read together, these four songs form a cohesive corpus for examining how Luk Thung songs construct working-class emotional experience across three affective modes: (1) rural estrangement, (2) transitional desire, and (3) urban-industrial emotional convergence. Their sustained popularity, historical visibility, and lyrical and sonic richness make them particularly suitable for analyzing how Luk Thung songs operate as a sonic archive of affective experience, in which widespread reception can be read as correlated with emotional recognition and acceptance among listeners navigating rural-urban labor transition.

The songs were selected according to three criteria:

- Historical prominence: Each piece was widely circulated and contributed to shared emotional vocabularies during a period of rapid labor transformation.
- Artist prestige: All songs were performed by highly influential figures in Luk Thung music genre whose voices shaped the affective soundscape of the era.
- Affective and thematic richness: Collectively, the songs articulate estrangement, aspiration, economic precarity, gendered emotional labor, and cross-regional solidarity, making them well suited for affective and sonic analysis.

In this sense, the songs function not merely as textual objects but as cultural participants, whose circulation, reception, and endurance provide empirical grounding for analyzing working-class emotional formation within Thailand's late-twentieth-century soundscape.

This study employs textual, sonic, and contextual analytic instruments to examine how Luk Thung songs construct working-class emotional experience among rural-origin listeners across three affective modes: rural estrangement, transitional desire, and industrial emotional convergence. Because the data consist of cultural texts rather than human subjects, the research instruments emphasize close reading, listening-based sonic analysis, and sociohistorical interpretation of emotional life. The methodological orientation draws on the insight that emotions shape social boundaries (Ahmed, 2004) and on an understanding of listening as a mode of cultural interpretation through which social and affective meanings are produced (Ochoa Gautier, 2014).

#### *Lyric Transcriptions and Researcher-Produced Translations*

Widely circulated Thai lyric transcriptions (Appendices 1-4) were collected for each of the four selected songs. English translations were produced by the researcher and verified by two Thai experts specializing in Thai-English translation to ensure semantic accuracy and to foreground culturally embedded expressions, class markers, regional accents, and affective cues central to rural-urban working-class experience. These paired Thai-English lyric sets constitute the primary materials for close reading and comparative interpretation. The translation process is especially crucial for songs in which emotional nuance is conveyed through colloquial diction and rural speech patterns.

#### *Affective-Discursive Coding Scheme*

An affective-discursive coding scheme was developed to identify thematic and emotional patterns across the corpus. Coding focused on:

- Rural-urban hierarchy and class positioning,
- expressions of shame, longing, aspiration, and self-doubt,
- economic precarity and gendered emotional labor,
- anticipatory signals of mobility, including liminal geographies such as Dao Khanong,
- sonic metaphors such as AM/FM frequencies as markers of social difference, and
- forms of emotional convergence generated through shared precarity under industrial labor.

Organized within a comparative analytic grid, this coding scheme allows songs to be interpreted both individually and relationally, revealing how they participate in a shared emotional structure shaped by Thailand's late-20th-century migration landscape.

#### *Sonic and Performance Analysis Framework*

To capture affect beyond textual meaning, the study employs a listening-based analytic framework grounded in sound studies and aurality (Ochoa Gautier, 2014). Listening is treated as an interpretive instrument, enabling analysis of how: vocal timbre, regional accent, melodic contour, pacing and rhythmic emphasis, and phrasing and breaks produce emotional meaning related to class identity, rural belonging, gendered vulnerability, or factory fatigue. Sonic features often communicate social positioning more directly than lyrics alone. Special consideration is given to *phleng kae* and reply-song structures in the *Chanthana* duet, where affective reciprocity and gendered negotiation are staged through alternating vocal lines. Integrating these performance elements clarifies how Luk Thung songs construct emotional worlds that guide listener identification and community formation.

### *Sociohistorical Reference Materials*

Sociohistorical sources provide essential grounding for interpreting how lyrical and sonic elements reflect the lived realities of workers. These include:

- demographic studies and labor-migration reports (United Nations Thailand, 2019),
- analyses of gendered industrial labor (Mills, 1999),
- studies of popular religion and migrant masculinity (Kitiarsa, 2009),
- media histories and biographies of Luk Thung performers, and
- archival material documenting industrial expansion in zones such as Dao Khanong and Samut Sakhon.

These materials contextualize emotional expression within structural transformations, connecting individual songs to broader shifts in Thailand's labor regime, rural mobility, and the cultural reception of Luk Thung songs.

### *Comparative Analytical Tables*

Comparative tables serve as analytic instruments for synthesizing textual and sonic evidence. Tables are used to:

- map affective indicators (e.g., shame, aspiration, fear of abandonment),
- visualize shifting emotional structures across the three modes, and
- clarify how estrangement, transitional desire, and emotional convergence function as distinct yet interconnected modalities.

These tables support cross-song comparison and help articulate how Luk Thung songs operate as a sonic archive that constructs collective rural-urban worker identity through patterned emotional expression.

### **Data analysis**

Data analysis followed a staged qualitative procedure integrating textual interpretation, affective–discursive coding, sonic analysis, and sociohistorical contextualization (Ahmed, 2004; Ochoa Gautier, 2014). This layered approach examines how Luk Thung songs construct working-class subjectivities among rural-origin listeners entering urban and industrial wage labor across three affective modes: rural estrangement, transitional desire, *and* working-class emotional convergence. First, paired Thai-English lyric sets were analyzed through close reading. Lines were coded for narrative structure, metaphor, markers of rural-urban identity, class positioning, gendered emotional labor, and expressions of shame, longing, anxiety, or hope. Using the affective-discursive scheme outlined earlier, categories such as rural self-affirmation, uncertainty under industrial labor, aspiration for mobility, and working-class solidarity emerged inductively from the texts.

Second, sonic features were examined through an interpretive listening protocol informed by sound studies and aurality. Vocal timbre, regional accent, melodic contour, pacing, and phrasing were treated as affective cues operating alongside textual meaning. Particular attention was given to reply-song structures in the *Chanthana* duet, where emotional negotiation and gendered reciprocity are staged through alternating vocal lines. This sonic layer clarifies how affect is embodied and circulated, consistent with Ahmed's (2004) account of emotion as socially generative and Ochoa Gautier's (2014) conception of listening as cultural interpretation.

Third, sociohistorical sources were used to contextualize the textual and sonic findings. Studies of labor migration, gendered factory work, and industrial expansion (Kitiarsa, 2009; Mills, 1999; Sa-nguanpuag, 1995; United Nations Thailand, 2019) ground the analysis in the historical conditions of Thailand's late-1970s to mid-1980s rural–urban transition, rather than treating workers as a formal migrant category.

Finally, comparative analytical tables synthesized patterns across the corpus, visualizing how each song aligns with or diverges from the three affective modes. By juxtaposing emotional indicators and sonic features, the tables clarify continuities and contrasts across songs and articulate the affective arc from *rural estrangement* to *transitional desire* to *working-class emotional convergence*.

## **RESULTS**

The analysis reveals that the four selected Luk Thung songs generate a coherent emotional arc that maps how rural-origin working-class listeners negotiate belonging across different stages of rural-urban labor transition. This arc unfolds through three distinct yet interconnected affective modes: (1) rural estrangement, (2) transitional desire, and (3) working-class

emotional convergence. Each mode is articulated through a combination of lyrical storytelling, vocal performance, and sonic cues that frame how listeners understand vulnerability, aspiration, and collective belonging within changing urban and industrial contexts.

**Mode 1: Rural Estrangement**

*Sao AM* — Estrangement as Rural Frequency

*Sao AM* constructs rural estrangement through the symbolic contrast between AM and FM radio frequencies, a divide embedded in Thailand’s sonic and social landscape of the 1970s-1980s. AM radio—low-cost, widely accessible, and capable of reaching distant provinces—was the primary medium through which rural audiences and rural–urban workers consumed Luk Thung songs, accompanying field labor, household routines, and travel. FM radio, by contrast, emerged as a marker of Bangkok modernity, associated with clearer sound, cosmopolitan taste, and urban middle-class sensibilities. The song mobilizes this acoustic divide to articulate a moral and emotional geography. For the female narrator, AM signifies sincerity and moral reliability, while FM indexes unpredictability, desire, and risk. Her repeated warning that a Bangkok man “who listens to FM” will deceive or abandon her draws on a widely shared stereotype of urban masculinity during the early migration era, culminating in the line: “Once you take my virginity, you will abandon me” (Appendix 1). Estrangement here is explicitly gendered, rooted in fears of sexual exploitation, shame, and abandonment within a rural moral economy that ties female virtue to family honor and social security.

The song’s affective reach extends beyond its narrative voice. It addresses both rural AM listeners, whose values are affirmed as morally protective, and rural-urban FM listeners—especially factory workers—who continued to consume Luk Thung songs through rebroadcasts, cassette tapes, and workplace radios. For the former, *Sao AM* stabilizes rural identity; for the latter, it reassures that rural moral frameworks remain necessary for navigating urban danger. The AM/FM metaphor thus performs estrangement as a shared affective stance across dispersed listening communities. Sonic analysis reinforces this configuration. Phumphuang Duangchan’s nasal timbre, controlled pacing, and emphasis on lines expressing fear of abandonment ground the song in agrarian tonalities and heighten tension between sincerity and risk. Together, textual and sonic elements frame estrangement not as exclusion but as a morally charged mode of survival. These patterns—rural self-affirmation, material markers of agrarian life, and opposition to urban moral instability—are synthesized in Table 1, which summarizes how *Sao AM* encodes estrangement as a coherent rural emotional framework.

**Table 1:** Analytical themes in *Sao AM* demonstrating how rural identity is affirmed through symbolic estrangement, material culture, and opposition to urban modernity

Analytical Theme	Lyrical Evidence	Interpretive Function
Rural Daily Life and Material Poverty	“At home I wear a sarong, carrying my basket into the fields”; “my radio costs only a little over one hundred baht”	The lyrics establish rural identity through subsistence labor and modest possessions, anchoring authenticity and class position.
Rural Material Culture as Embodied Identity	“A sarong”; “basket”; “the fields”; “a low-cost radio”	The lyrics show material culture as inseparable from selfhood; rural authenticity is expressed through everyday technologies and tools.
AM Radio as Cultural Symbol	“I never stop listening to the AM radio”; “I switch to AM to hear Luk Thung songs”	The lyrics define AM as a sonic marker of rural values, sincerity, and emotional depth in opposition to urban musical modernity.
Symbolic Media Opposition: AM vs. FM	“You listen to FM”; “cold-hearted Bangkok men”; “when you meet a beautiful FM girl”	The lyrics encode class and cultural hierarchy via media technology: urban FM stands for cosmopolitan desire and instability, while rural AM stands for loyalty and sincerity.
Self-Positioning as Rural / “Out of Sync”	“I speak the old Thai of the marketplace”	The lyrics use estrangement as self-definition: rural speech and taste become cultural assets, not deficits.
Fear of Deception and Moral Danger	“Bangkok boy, don’t deceive me or raise my hopes”; “seeing a country girl, you might try to exploit her”	The lyrics frame the rural woman’s caution as moral clarity, critiquing urban men’s predatory behavior.
Gendered Vulnerability	“This AM girl grows anxious—hot and cold with worry”	The lyrics express the emotional risk carried by rural women, indicating awareness of moral scrutiny and potential abandonment.
Urban Male as Untrustworthy	“Bangkok men are cold-hearted”; “you’ll forget the AM girl”	The lyrics reinforce a narrative of urban insincerity and rural virtue, a moral binary that strengthens rural affirmation.
Rural Affirmation Against Urban Abandonment	“If you took up with a girl from the fields, you might abandon her and make it gossip”; “once you take my virginity, you will abandon me”	The lyrics use fear of abandonment to affirm rural moral superiority, as estrangement becomes a protective strategy.

## Mode 2: Transitional Desire

### *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*

*Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* occupies an important transitional position between fully rural narratives and later Luk Thung songs shaped by industrial labor contexts in the 1980s. Unlike *Sao AM*, which foregrounds anxiety toward Bangkok-centered modernity, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* articulates a gentler, aspirational horizon structured by transitional desire—a desire that remains anchored in agrarian pride while becoming increasingly attuned to mobility, monetary exchange, and the possibility of new futures.

The song's emotional world is built on reciprocal affection across rural occupations: the rice-field boy and the salt-field girl. Their flirtation unfolds through imagery of labor and exchange—such as “selling salt to buy rice”—which affirms the dignity of rural work while gesturing toward economic vulnerability. The girl's identity is not purely agrarian; coming from a salt-field-owning family, her livelihood is tied to a small local enterprise, positioning her closer to cash circulation and creating an affective space where aspiration and continuity coexist. This transitional sensibility is reinforced by the setting in Dao Khanong, a garment-factory district in southwest Bangkok located on the city's expanding edge and accessible from Samut Sakhon by rail or newly built roads in the 1970s (Botthachon, 2020). Although the lyrics do not specify employment, the location signals a liminal zone where rural lifeworlds intersect with emerging industrial spaces, allowing rural affection to be expressed within urban proximity rather than full industrial incorporation.

Unlike *Sao AM*, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* does not perform estrangement. Instead, it performs emergent desire—a sense that rural love, rural dignity, and rural futures remain possible even as economic pathways shift. The absence of urban fear is itself significant. Rather than encountering Bangkok as moral danger, the couple remains grounded in their agricultural identities, yet their romantic meeting in an industrializing corridor hints at the emotional beginnings of migration-era mobility.

Thus, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* supports the broader argument by showing that Luk Thung songs' affective landscape includes transitional emotions, not only polarized rural estrangement or urban convergence. The song demonstrates how listeners could recognize themselves in a narrative that preserves rural pride while quietly acknowledging the expanding economic and geographic horizons of the late 1970s-early 1980s.

### *Comparative Interpretation Across Rural Narratives*

*Sao AM* and *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* articulate two contrasting yet related modes of rural emotional life during Thailand's late-twentieth-century migration era. Both affirm rural identity, but they do so through different affective orientations that reveal the diversity of rural subjectivity prior to full industrial incorporation. *Sao AM* frames rural estrangement through a moralized acoustic metaphor. The AM/FM distinction functions as an index of trust, sexual risk, and the moral ambiguity of urban modernity. Estrangement here is defensive, serving as an affective strategy for rural women navigating vulnerability and fear of abandonment. Rural identity is thus articulated through caution, virtue, and vigilance rather than through aspiration. By contrast, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* presents rural affinity grounded in shared agrarian labor and mutual recognition. Regional and occupational differences become points of connection rather than suspicion. Set in Dao Khanong, a site shaped by rural-urban labor mobility, the song situates its protagonists at the threshold of industrial life while remaining anchored in agrarian values. The narrative emphasizes dignity and solidarity over urban ambition.

Despite these differences, both songs link rural identity to material labor and encode anxieties about sincerity and abandonment. Together, they establish an emotional vocabulary—caution, pride in labor, and longing for stability—that anticipates the working-class emotional convergence later realized in the *Chanthana* duet. Rather than merely preceding industrial narratives, these rural songs prefigure the affective structures that will shape rural-urban worker identity under industrial modernity.

## Mode 3: Working-Class Emotional Convergence

While Mode 1 and Mode 2 emphasize estrangement rooted in rural identity and anxiety about urban masculinity, Mode 3 examines how Luk Thung songs generate shared emotional structures among industrial workers, particularly through duet or reply-song forms. These factory-era narratives no longer center rural-urban hierarchy as the main tension; instead, they foreground economic precarity, gendered vulnerability, and the search for emotional stability within the unstable conditions of wage labor. Through sonic and lyrical interplay, the *Chanthana* duet pair constructs a collective emotional world in which working-class subjects find recognition in each other's fears, desires, and aspirations.

*Chanthana Thi Rak — Male Narrative of Factory-Age Vulnerability*

*Chanthana Thi Rak* situates desire firmly within the constraints of industrial life. The male narrator writes a love letter late at night—“turning off the light, locking the door”—before rushing to deliver it ahead of the woman’s textile-factory shift. These details foreground factory rhythms: fixed hours, restricted mobility, and the need to coordinate intimacy around the industrial clock. According to the lyrics (Appendix 3), his apology for “poor handwriting” and “little schooling” signals classed self-consciousness. As Mills (1999) observes, industrialization intensified social comparison among rural-urban workers, particularly in gendered factory settings. The narrator’s anxiety reflects this shift, as he doubts whether his rural background is adequate for a wage-earning woman embedded in a more modern social world.

The exchange of photographs further structures this emotional economy. By promising to “treasure [her photo] like a sacred charm,” he turns an everyday object into an affective anchor that bridges distance and instability. This aligns with Cvetkovich’s (2003) account of affective archives, in which objects store and circulate feeling under labor-constrained conditions. His plea for forgiveness if his confession “fails to please” reveals how emotional vulnerability mirrors economic precarity, with intimacy both strained by and imagined as relief from industrial life.

*Chanthana Top Rak — Female Narrative of Emotional Self-Protection*

In *Chanthana Top Rak*, Phumphuang Duangchan voices the woman’s internal fears from within the factory dormitory, a key site of Thailand’s industrial landscape characterized by surveillance, limited privacy, and strong moral regulation. Her hesitation to reply—explained by her “low wage”—articulates a gendered anxiety distinct from the male narrator’s. While he fears social inadequacy, she fears being economically burdensome or undesirable. This dynamic reflects Mills’ (1999) observation that factory women were subject to intense scrutiny regarding respectability, beauty, and economic worth. Lines such as “A factory girl, not beautiful; you may keep my photo only as a bother to your eyes” reveal a deep internalization of classed and gendered hierarchies shaped by industrial modernity. Ahmed’s (2004) theorization of emotion as producing boundaries of “inside” and “outside” helps explain how the female narrator positions herself as outside normative femininity, even as her labor sustains the industrial economy.

Yet alongside self-doubt, the song expresses longing and hope. She rereads his letter, imagines sending her photograph, and contemplates lasting love. The duet thus stages reciprocal vulnerability: both partners negotiate desire under conditions of wage labor, migration, and gendered constraint, transforming emotional self-protection into a shared affective terrain.

*Working-Class Emotional Convergence in the Chanthana Duet*

Together, the two *Chanthana* songs enact a mode of emotional convergence grounded not in shared geographic origins but in the shared conditions of industrial precarity. As summarized in Table 2, factory life synchronizes the lovers’ experiences through shift work, producing a rhythm of longing shaped by exhaustion and limited personal time. Both narrators express anxieties about economic adequacy and social worth: the man worries that limited education renders him unfit for a wage-earning woman, while the woman fears that low wages and perceived lack of beauty diminish her desirability. These mirrored insecurities reflect class position, gendered expectations, and the pressures of industrial modernity.

Emotional negotiation unfolds through mediated communication, particularly letters and photographs, which function as affective anchors within unstable working conditions. At the sonic level, the duet and reply-song structure stages intimacy through complementary vocal lines and shared melodic phrasing, reinforcing reciprocal vulnerability. In this way, Luk Thung songs become what Ahmed (2004) describes as a site where emotion “creates the effect of the social,” while also operating as an affective archive in Cvetkovich’s (2003) sense—an aesthetic form that both records and generates the emotional textures of working-class life. The *Chanthana* duet thus moves beyond representing industrial experience to produce a shared emotional map through which rural–urban laborers recognize one another across gendered and economic divides.

**Table 2:** Comparative emotional structures in the two *Chanthana* songs, illustrating how working-class convergence emerges through parallel experiences of industrial precarity, mediated affection, and class-conscious self-doubt

Analytic Dimension	<i>Chanthana Thi Rak (Male Worker)</i>	<i>Chanthana Top Rak (Female Worker)</i>
<b>Narrative Position</b>	The male worker writes at night after factory shifts; initiates affection.	The female worker ( <i>Chanthana</i> ) reads letter in factory dorm; hesitates to reply.
<b>Class Consciousness &amp; Self-Doubt</b>	The male worker apologizes for poor handwriting and low education (“my schooling was so little”).	The female worker fears her low wage and lack of education make her unworthy (“my wage is low... I have no schooling”).
<b>Economic Precarity</b>	The male worker frames love within exhaustion and irregular work schedules; expresses anxiety about not matching her status.	The female worker links hesitation directly to low pay and insecurity; worries about being a burden or disappointment.
<b>Gendered Emotional Vulnerability</b>	The male worker performs with sincerity, humility, and fear of losing her; offers his photo as proof of devotion.	The female worker performs with caution, modesty, and fear of heartbreak; worries he may grow tired of her photo.
<b>Mediated Intimacy (Letters &amp; Photos)</b>	The male worker sends a signed photograph as a “sacred charm,” hoping it stabilizes affection across distance.	The female worker holds his photograph dearly but fears sending her own; considers engraving her heart on the back if he truly cares.
<b>Rural-urban Workers / Factory-Life Conditions</b>	The male worker describe writing between shifts and sending letters before her workday; intimacy shaped by wage labor rhythms.	The female worker describes waiting in dormitory, listening to love songs; affection constrained by limited privacy and moral scrutiny.
<b>Affective Structure</b>	The male worker’s longing articulated through self-deprecation and earnest emotional exposure.	The female worker’s longing articulated through anxiety, cautious hope, and internalized gendered expectations.
<b>Emotional Convergence</b>	The male worker seeks reassurance that his sincerity will be accepted despite class limitations.	The female worker seeks reassurance that her fears of abandonment are unfounded and that love can persist despite precarity.

*Synthesis: Working-Class Emotional Convergence in the Chanthana Duet*

The *Chanthana* duet enacts Mode 3: Working-Class Emotional Convergence, the culminating affective configuration in this study’s three-mode framework. Whereas Mode 1: Rural Estrangement articulates moral distance and vigilance toward Bangkok-centered modernity (*Sao AM*), and Mode 2: Transitional Desire registers anticipatory orientation at the threshold of industrial life (*Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*), the *Chanthana* songs are situated fully within industrial incorporation. Here, emotional life is shaped by the rhythms, constraints, and vulnerabilities of factory labor rather than rural defensiveness or imagined futures.

Although the two songs present distinct narrative voices, their emotional trajectories converge around shared industrial conditions. The male narrator writes from exhaustion after shift labor, marked by anxiety over limited education and rural background. The female narrator reads his letter in a crowded factory dormitory, expressing parallel insecurities about low wages, education, and desirability. Across both songs, self-doubt becomes the dominant affective register through which intimacy is negotiated, signaling a shift from estrangement and anticipation toward a shared emotional vocabulary forged within industrial precarity. This reciprocal structure illustrates what Ahmed (2004) describes as emotion’s capacity to “create the effect of the social.” Unlike Mode 1: Rural Estrangement, which organizes emotional boundaries, or Mode 2: Transitional Desire, which orients affect toward potential futures, Mode:3 Working-Class Emotional Convergence produces a shared emotional field within factory life itself. Letters and photographs—objects Cvetkovich (2003) conceptualizes as affective archives—mediate intimacy under conditions of distance, shift schedules, and limited face-to-face contact, stabilizing affection within the unstable temporalities of wage labor.

At the sonic level, this convergence is reinforced through dialogic structure. Matched melodic contours, pacing, and parallel phrasing stage gendered reciprocity through sound. As Ochoa Gautier (2014) suggests, such sonic features articulate social relations beyond words, rendering industrial vulnerability audible and collectively recognizable. Through this coordinated structure, the *Chanthana* duet becomes an affective model of how working-class people negotiate dignity, desire, and uncertainty under industrial modernity. Building on Mode 1 and Mode 2, Mode 3: Working-Class Emotional Convergence transforms vulnerability into mutual recognition, completing three-part affective architecture of the related Luk Thung songs. In aggregate, these results clarify how Luk Thung songs operate as a sonic archive that organizes rural estrangement, transitional desire, and emotional convergence, providing rural-origin workers with affective resources for navigating industrial factory life.

## DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

From a broader interpretive perspective, the affective patterns identified in this study reflect the emotional conditions through which rural-origin workers experienced the transition into industrial wage labor. Feelings of estrangement articulate moral uncertainty and self-surveillance as rural values encounter urban discipline, while transitional desire registers anticipation and anxiety before full entry into factory life. Working-class emotional convergence, in turn, reflects how shared precarity and gendered labor conditions foster mutual recognition and collective endurance. Together, these emotions illuminate how industrialization was lived affectively, not only structurally, shaping working-class subjectivity during Thailand's late-twentieth-century rural-urban transformation. Rather than introducing new empirical cases, this study advances existing Luk Thung music scholarship by reinterpreting familiar songs through an affective and sonic framework that foregrounds emotional convergence as a constitutive dimension of working-class formation.

### Revisiting Luk Thung as Sonic Archive: A Theoretical Interpretation

This section revisits four Luk Thung song narratives—*Sao AM*, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*, and the *Chanthana* duet—to examine how they shape rural-urban working-class identity through emotion, voice, and sonic circulation. Rather than treating these songs as descriptive reflections of rural life, the discussion approaches them as affective technologies that actively produce social relations. Drawing on Ahmed's (2004) argument that emotions "create the very effect of the social" and Ochoa Gautier's (2014) formulation of aurality as the site where relational worlds are constituted, the analysis shows how Luk Thung songs function as a sonic archive through which rural-origin workers imagine themselves, recognize one another, and negotiate the emotional burdens of mobility and modernity. Read through the framework of *Strangers in Paradise*, these songs reveal how Luk Thung songs mediate working-class emotional life under rural-urban transition. Estrangement here does not denote total alienation but a condition of being affectively out of sync with dominant imaginaries of urban modernity, marked by fear of abandonment, classed self-doubt, and moral vigilance. At the same time, Luk Thung songs enable working-class emotional convergence by transforming individualized anxieties into shared affective structures. The genre thus allows listeners to inhabit the paradox of attraction to the urban "paradise" while remaining positioned as partial outsiders within it.

### Revisiting Estrangement: Rural Frequency and Affective Distance from Bangkok

Revisiting *Sao AM* reveals that estrangement functions not merely as commentary on rural-urban difference but as a performative act that binds rural listeners through shared moral and emotional codes. The AM/FM contrast operates as a sonic metaphor for unequal access to modernity: AM signifies affordability, sincerity, and agrarian rhythm, while FM indexes polished urban modernity and moral unreliability. The female narrator's fear of abandonment by a Bangkok man crystallizes estrangement as a shared affective orientation. Through Ahmed's framework, estrangement emerges as a circulating emotion that produces rural belonging by delineating moral boundaries between "inside" and "outside." Ochoa Gautier's (2014) concept of aurality further clarifies that this process unfolds through sound itself, as timbre, melodic simplicity, and radio-oriented form render rural identity audible and emotionally tangible.

### Revisiting Transitional Desire: *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*

*Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* marks a transitional affective formation in which agrarian identities encounter emerging urban possibility. Although the protagonists remain rice and salt-field workers, their meeting in Dao Khanong—a textile and garment district—signals an emotional threshold rather than full urban incorporation. Their encounter articulates aspiration, attraction, and uncertainty at the edge of mobility. Ahmed's notion of an "affective horizon" helps explain this liminality: desire is oriented toward a future not yet realized. At the sonic level, Ochoa Gautier's (2014) emphasis on vocal exchange illuminates how the duet stages mutual recognition, anticipating the more complex emotional negotiations of industrial worker narratives in the *Chanthana* songs. The piece thus functions as an early articulation of how love and mobility intersect in rural-urban imagination.

### Revisiting Convergence: The *Chanthana* Duet

The *Chanthana* duet completes this arc by transforming individual vulnerability into shared emotional structure within industrial life. Embedded in factory schedules and dormitory conditions, both narrators express fear of inadequacy—limited education, low wages, and fragile self-worth. Letters and photographs function as affective archives in Cvetkovich's (2003) sense, sustaining intimacy under conditions of temporal and emotional precarity. Revisiting the duet through Ahmed's framework shows that emotion does not merely represent intimacy but actively produces it. Shame, longing, hesitation, and hope circulate between the male and female voices, forming a shared emotional field that listeners recognize as their own. As Ochoa Gautier (2014) suggests, alternating vocal timbres and parallel phrasing enact a relational acoustics through which industrial workers hear their vulnerabilities normalized and dignified.

The *Chanthana* duet thus exemplifies working-class emotional convergence, grounded not in shared regional origin but in shared precarity and the affective burdens of industrial modernity.

### **Revisiting the Songs as Affective Tools: From Representation to Worldmaking**

Across these four revisited narratives, Luk Thung songs emerge not merely as a reflective genre but as an active modality of emotional worldmaking.

- *Sao AM* produces estrangement as a shared moral stance.
- *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* produces transitional desire as an imaginative on-ramp to urban life.
- The *Chanthana* duet produces emotional convergence as an affective community grounded in vulnerability.

Viewed through Ahmed (2004), these emotions generate the very social formations they describe. Viewed through Ochoa Gautier (2014), the sonic features of Luk Thung songs constitute the relational worlds in which rural-urban workers recognize themselves. Luk Thung songs are therefore a “sonic archive” not simply because it records rural-urban worker experiences, but because it creates durable emotional structures that circulate among listeners, shaping how rural and rural-urban Thais interpret their lives, relationships, and possibilities within an unequal social landscape.

## **SIGNIFICANCE, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

### **Theoretical and Practical Significance**

This study advances theoretical understandings of Luk Thung songs by demonstrating that the genre functions as a sonic archive that not only reflects but actively shapes rural-urban working-class identity. Following Ahmed’s (2004) formulation of emotion as a force that “creates the effect of the social,” the analysis shows how estrangement, aspiration, vulnerability, and solidarity circulate through Luk Thung narratives, producing shared emotional formations among rural-origin listeners.

Drawing on Ochoa Gautier’s (2014) concept of aurality, the study further demonstrates that these formations are produced through sound itself. Vocal timbre, phrasing, duet structures, and radiophonic listening conditions generate relational acoustics through which listeners recognize themselves and one another. Luk Thung songs thus operate not merely as representation, but as an affective and sonic practice through which rural-urban worker communities negotiate belonging. Practically, the findings highlight a role of Luk Thung songs as a cultural resource for communities shaped by rural-urban mobility. The songs examined provide emotional scaffolding for navigating separation, insecurity, and labor precarity, reaffirming Luk Thung songs’ value for educators, archivists, and cultural institutions as both documentary evidence of Thailand’s industrial transition and an interpretive tool for understanding working-class experience. Because the emotional structures identified here—such as longing, fear of abandonment, and dignity under precarity—remain salient, Luk Thung songs continue to offer insight into Thailand’s evolving labor landscape.

### **Limitations**

This study has several limitations. First, it analyzes a small corpus of four songs within a diverse Luk Thung musical repertoire. While selected for cultural prominence and interpretive depth, a broader corpus spanning periods, regions, and subgenres would allow for a more comprehensive mapping of affective formations. Second, although lyric translations were produced by the author as a native Thai speaker, translation alone cannot capture the full resonance of Luk Thung songs as a sonic archive, which also emerges through performance context, memory, and embodied listening. Third, the absence of ethnographic or reception data limits assessment of how contemporary workers engage with these songs in daily life.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Future research may extend this study through reception-based ethnography among rural–urban workers, historical analysis of Luk Thung songs across later periods (including post-1997 and digital-era productions), and comparative work across media platforms. Together, these approaches would refine the theoretical model proposed here and clarify how Luk Thung songs continue to mediate the emotional life of working-class communities in Thailand and beyond.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study demonstrates that Luk Thung songs function not merely as a musical reflection of rural life but as a sonic archive that actively shapes the emotional worlds of its listeners. Through *Sao AM*, *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea*, and the *Chanthana* duet, the analysis identifies three interrelated affective formations—*rural estrangement*, *transitional desire*, and *working-*

*class emotional convergence*—through which rural-origin working-class subjects interpret aspiration, vulnerability, and belonging in relation to urban and industrial life. Viewed through this framework, *Strangers in Paradise* captures the central tension of Luk Thung songs in the 1970s-1980s: the coexistence of estrangement and emotional convergence. These songs do not simply document hardship or aspiration. They generate an affective common in which rural-origin workers recognize themselves as simultaneously drawn toward and unsettled by urban modernity. Luk Thung songs thus stabilizes belonging without resolving distance, enabling emotional connection amid uncertainty in Thailand’s rapidly changing social landscape.

Drawing on Ahmed’s (2004) understanding of emotion as a force that produces social boundaries, this study shows how fear, longing, dignity, and vulnerability crystallize into collective identities. Ochoa Gautier’s (2014) concept of aurality further clarifies that these identities are produced through sound itself—through vocal timbre, duet structures, pacing, and radio-oriented acoustics that render rural-urban labor transition audible as a shared emotional experience. Crucially, the songs examined here reveal that working-class subjectivity is not formed solely through physical movement to the city, but affectively, through circulating narratives of aspiration, caution, hope, and mutual recognition. Even transitional narratives imagine the emotional horizon of mobility before industrial incorporation fully occurs. By integrating textual, sonic, and sociohistorical analysis, I argue that Luk Thung songs shape the affective infrastructure of Thailand’s late-twentieth-century working class. The genre not only recorded rural-urban transformation but provided listeners with emotional resources to navigate it, creating a durable auditory common through which working-class identities grounded in rural–urban labor transition could be felt, negotiated, and shared.

## DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI USE

This article benefited from limited use of artificial intelligence tools for language refinement and editorial clarity during the revision process. All analyses, interpretations, and conclusions are solely the author’s own.

## THE AUTHOR

**Chawarote Valyamedhi**, PhD, is an assistant professor at Department of Southeast Asian Languages and Cultures, National Chengchi University (NCCU), Taiwan. His research interests include performing art cultures of Asia, Buddhist material culture, ritual performance, intangible cultural heritage, culture and identity.  
 Email: c.valy@nccu.edu.tw

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: *Sao AM* (สาวเอเอ็ม, AM Girl)

#### Thai Lyrics

บ้านนางุ้งป่าหยาบกระบุงลูญา  
 พูดภาษาไทยเดิมท้องตลาด  
 ฟังวิทยุเอเอ็มมิได้ขาด  
 มีวิทยุราคาซื้อขายกว่าบาท  
 บ้างฟังในกระจาดบ้างก็พาดขอบกระบุง  
 อยากมีสุขใจก็เอื้อมมือไปหมุนเข็ม  
 เปิดเอเอ็มฟังเพลงของลูกทุ่ง  
 ยามใดเราไถทำไปด้วยใจมุ่ง  
 อาหารพอรามีกินทั้งปลากุ้ง  
 ผักเบี้ยผักบั้งมีทั้งปลาร้าปลาเค็ม  
 พ่อหนุ่มกรุงอย่ามาหลอกให้หวัง  
 มันไม่เหมาะกันกรรมเพราะที่ฟังเอเอ็ม  
 หนุ่มบางกอกคนเขาบอกใจเค็ม  
 เห็นเป็นบ้านนอกก็จะหลอกทะเล็ม  
 สาวเอเอ็มซึกร้อนร้อนหนาวหนาว  
 ที่เป็นหนุ่มกรุงก็เหมาะกับคนชาวกรุง  
 ได้ชาวทุ่งกลัวทิ้งให้เป็นชาว  
 พอน้องสิ้นสาวราโรยก็เอยอ้าว  
 เจอสาวทรงสวยเอเอ็มเหมือนกันเข้า  
 ได้กลิ่นแก้มขาวจะลืมสาวเอเอ็ม

#### English Translation

At home I wear a sarong, carrying my basket into the fields.  
 I speak the old Thai of the marketplace.  
 I never stop listening to the AM radio.  
 My radio costs only a little over one hundred baht.  
 Sometimes I place it in the basket, sometimes on its edge.  
 When I want to feel happy, I reach out and turn the dial.  
 I switch to AM to hear Luk Thung songs.  
 As I plow the fields, I work with determination.  
 I have enough to eat—fish and shrimp.  
 Wild greens, morning glory, fermented fish, salted fish.  
 Bangkok boy, don't deceive me or raise my hopes.  
 We are not suitable—you listen to FM.  
 They say Bangkok men are cold-hearted.  
 Seeing a country girl, you might try to exploit her.  
 This AM girl grows anxious—hot and cold with worry.  
 You, a city boy, belong with city girls.  
 If you took up with a girl from the fields, you might abandon her and make it gossip.  
 Once you take my virginity, you will abandon me.  
 And when you meet a beautiful FM girl—  
 One whiff of her fragrant cheeks and you'll forget the AM girl.

### Appendix 2: *Num Na Khao Sao Na Kluea* (หนุ่มนาข้าวสาวนาเกลือ, Rice Farm Boy and Salt Farm Girl)

#### Thai Lyrics

(ชาย) บ้านของพี่ทำนาทำนา ปลูกข้าวทุกเมื่อ  
 (หญิง) น้องก็ทำนาเกลือ ชายเกลือนี้ซื้อข้าวกิน  
 (ชาย) บ้านของพี่อยู่ที่กาฬสินธุ์  
 (หญิง) ส่วนตัวพี่อยู่ในสมุทรสาคร  
 (ชาย) พี่มาเจอคนงามคนงาม มาเที่ยวดาวคะนอง  
 (หญิง) นับว่าเป็นบุญของน้องมาพบ พี่ที่ทักน้องก่อน  
 (ชาย) อยากไปอยู่จัง ที่สมุทรสาคร  
 (หญิง) พี่ที่ว่าวอน พูดมากแล้วไม่จริง  
 (ชาย) พี่ทำนาปลูกข้าว รักน้องสาวแก้มเรื่อ  
 (หญิง) น้องเป็นสาวนาเกลือ  
 (ชาย) หนุ่มนาข้าวไม่ทอดทิ้ง  
 (ชาย) ถ้าพี่จะไปขอไปขอ พ่อจะว่ายังไง  
 (หญิง) น้องสุดแสนดีใจ ถ้าพี่ไปขอน้องจริงจังจริง  
 (ชาย) หนุ่มนาข้าว รับรองไม่ทอดทิ้ง  
 (หญิง) ถ้ารักน้องจริง อย่างที่สาวนาเกลือ

#### English Translation

(Male) My family farms rice; we plant rice all the time.  
 (Female) I also farm salt; I sell that salt to buy rice to eat.  
 (Male) My home is in Kalasin.  
 (Female) As for me, I live in Samut Sakhon.  
 (Male) I met you, such a beautiful girl, visiting Dao Khanong.  
 (Female) It is my good fortune to meet you, that you greeted me first.  
 (Male) I really want to live there, in Samut Sakhon.  
 (Female) The things you plead for... I'm afraid they aren't true.  
 (Male) I farm rice; I love you, girl with glowing cheeks.  
 (Female) I am just a salt-farming girl.  
 (Male) This rice-farming boy won't abandon you.  
 (Male) If I go ask for your hand, what would your father say?  
 (Female) I'd be so happy if you ask him sincerely.  
 (Male) The rice-farming boy guarantees he won't abandon you.  
 (Female) If you truly love me, don't abandon the salt-farming girl.

**Appendix 3: Chanthana Thi Rak (ฉันหนาที่รัก, My Beloved Chanthana)**

**Thai Lyrics**

ปิดไฟใส่กลอน จะเข้านอน คิดถึงใบหน้า  
นั่งเขียนจดหมาย แล้วรีบทิ้งไปโรงงานทอผ้า  
ถึงคนชื่อฉันหนา ที่เคยสบตากันเป็นประจำ  
ลายมือไม่ดี ต้องขอโทษที เพราะความรู้ต่ำ  
หากคำพูดไม่ถูกหัวใจ หรือไม่ชุ่มฉ่ำ  
ของจกโทษถ้อยคำ ที่ผมเปลี่ยงลับอกรักคุณมา  
หากผิดพลั้งไป อภัยเถิดฉันหนา  
ผมคนบ้านป่า ถ้อยวาจาไม่หวานกินใจ  
ภาพถ่ายลายเซ็น ผมส่งให้เป็นของขวัญปีใหม่  
หากคุณเกลียดชัง เมื่ออ่านด้านหลังแล้วโยนทิ้งได้  
หรือเอาไปฉีกเผาไฟ อย่าเก็บเอาไว้ ให้มันบาดตา  
หากคุณกรุณย ก็ส่งรูปคุณให้ดูแทนหน้า  
ช่วยเซ็นรูปไป ว่ามอดด้วยใจสาวโรงงาน  
ผมจะเอาไว้บูชา มอบความรักธา รักจนวายปราณ  
จะปักหัวใจ หัวใจรักคุณนานนาน  
รักสาวโรงงาน สาวโรงงาน ชื่อฉันหนา

**English Translation**

Turning off the light, latching the door — about to sleep, I think of your face.  
Sitting to write a letter, then rushing to drop it off before your shift at the textile factory.  
To the one named *Chanthana* — the one whose eyes once met mine so often.  
My handwriting is poor — please forgive me; my schooling was so little.  
If any of my words feel wrong or fail to please your heart,  
Please pardon the clumsy phrases through which I confessed my love.  
If I have overstepped — forgive me, *Chanthana*.  
I am a man of the wild countryside — my words lack sweet charm.  
I send you my signed photograph — a New Year's gift from me.  
If you despise it, after reading the back, you may throw it away.  
Or tear it and burn it — don't keep it if it pains your eyes to see.  
But if you are kind — send your photo, so I may see your face instead.  
Sign it saying it is given from your heart — you girl of the textile factory.  
I will treasure it like a sacred charm — loving you faithfully until my final breath.  
I will stitch my heart — loving you forever and ever.  
I love the factory girl — the factory girl named *Chanthana*.

**Appendix 4: Chanthana Top Rak (ฉันหนาตอบรัก, Chanthana Replies to the Love)**

**Thai Lyrics**

อยู่หอคอยด้วยใจเลือนลอย สาวโรงงาน  
แว่วเสียงเพลงรักซึ่งใจยิ่งนั้ก อยากเห็นใบหน้า  
หวานใจตัวฉันหนา อยากอ่อยวาจา ตอบรับคำ  
เฝ้าอ่านจดหมายไม่กล้าตอบไป เพราะเงินเดือนต่ำ  
สาวโรงงานนี้ ความรู้ไม่มีรักแยกกลัวคว่า  
อยากมีแฟนคงประจำแต่กลัวจะซ้ำในอุรา  
หากรักปวดใจอันตรายนะฉันหนา  
เราคนบ้านป่า ไร่ดอกฟ้าอยู่สูงกรุงไกล  
ภาพถ่ายลายเซ็นพอรับได้เห็นแสนซึ่งดวงใจ  
จะส่งตอบมาแต่ใจไม่กล้ากลัวคุณจะหน่าย  
สาวโรงงานไม่สวยบาดใจจะเก็บเอาไว้ให้เกะกะตา  
หากจริงจากใจจะส่งภาพไปให้ดูแทนหน้า  
สลักดวงใจบนหลังภาพถ่าย สาวโรงงาน  
หากคุณจะคิดเมตตา จะปรารถนารักไปนานนาน  
อย่าแจกหัวใจรักใคร่รักไปไหนบ้าง  
รักสาวโรงงานหญิงคนนั้นชื่อ ฉันหนา

**English Translation**

In the dorm I wait, my heart drifting — a girl of the textile factory.  
A love song softly echoes — I long to see your face.  
Beloved *Chanthana* — I long to speak, to accept your words.  
I reread your letter — afraid to reply, for my wage is low.  
This factory girl — uneducated, fearing love may collapse.  
I want a sweetheart by my side — yet fear heartbreak in my breast.  
If love brings pain — it is dangerous for my fragile heart.  
We are forest folk — not heavenly flowers high in the distant capital.  
Your signed photograph — I hold it dearly in my heart.  
I wish to send mine back — yet fear you may grow tired of me.  
A factory girl — not beautiful; you may keep my face only as bothersome clutter.  
If your heart is true — I will send my picture to stand in place of my face.  
I will engrave my heart upon the back — this girl of the weaving factory.  
If you would show kindness — I will hope for love lasting long.  
Do not scatter your heart — loving others, loving elsewhere.  
Love the factory girl — the woman whose name is *Chanthana*.